JUSTICE PARTY

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION

Welcome by P. T. Rajan

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Welcome by P. T. Rajan

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you when we are celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the Justice Party today. Some old partymen asked me what provocation there was for this celebration as the party is not functioning—meaning thereby that it had not contested the elections for the last 10 years. My reply was that the present generation does not know that the party has been subjected to gross misrepresentation and virulent vilification. It is indeed fortunate that in spite of all the violent propaganda against the party, it has been able to keep its head above water. Those who follow my speech may be inclined to feel that there is enough justification for this celebration.

ORIGIN OF THE PARTY

The manifesto issued in 1916 which is printed elsewhere in the Souvenir was the basis on which the South Indian Liberal Federation was founded. Its joint sponsors were Dr. T. M. Nair and Sir P. Theagaroya Chettiar. The one was an intellectual giant and the other was a practical politician with a large heart and wide human sympathies.

As there was a talk of democratic institutions being introduced in India after the First World War, the sponsors of the manifesto wanted that the cross-section of society should be equally prepared to share the responsibility of running the administration. To that end they wanted to provide representation to the several communities, especially the backward ones in the governance of the country. To begin with, representation was to be given to them both in the local bodies and educational institutions. Likewise, in government services adequate and just representation was to be provided for them. It was not the desire of the sponsors, much less of their successors, to exclude Brahmins from government and public life. In short, it was mainly to push up the backward communities and not to pull down any forward community. The constitution of the party contemplated the inclusion of the Southern States in the Federation.

DYARCHY

Under the Government of India Act, 1919, the first general elections took place in 1920. It was in this Council

that dyarchic form of government was introduced. The government consisted of two halves, the Reserved and the Transferred. The Reserved half was styled as Executive Council and its members were mainly drawn from the Indian Civil Service and held office for a period of five years. They were known as Executive Councillors and owed no responsibility for any act of theirs to the legislature. The Transferred half came to be known as the ministry and it consisted of elected representatives. They and their portfolios were subject to the scrutiny and control of the Council. In this election the Federation won the majority of seats. The reservation of seats for Non-Brahmin Hindus which had been conceded as a result of great agitation, was found unnecessary and it became a dead letter in the first election itself. The members of the Federation formed a single majority party and this enabled them to form a stable ministry without depending on the official block or the nominated members. The legislative wing of the Federation came to be known as the Justice Party.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Madras was lucky then to have had Lord Willingdon as the Governor and Sir P. Rajagopalachariar as the first nominated President of the Legislative Council. The Governor could have selected any three men of the party as ministers but he did not do so. Being well-versed in parliamentary practice, he called upon Sir P. Theagaroya Chettiar to form the ministry. He declined the honour. This convention of calling upon the leader of the majority party to form the ministry has been followed since then. Then Mr. A. Subbarayalu Reddiar formed the first ministry with Raja Ramarayaningar, who later became Raja of Panagal, and Mr. K. V. Reddi as his colleagues. I may say that Mr. Reddiar was a dark horse in politics then. He was however an eminent lawyer in Cuddalore and the Chairman of its Municipal Council. He was the first non-official President nominated to the District Board of South Arcot. I may say that he was one of the three non-officials nominated as Presidents of District Boards. Due to his indifferent health, he resigned his office in July 1921. He died in November of the same year. He was succeeded by Raja Ramarayaningar who chose Messrs. K. V. Reddi and A. P. Patro as his colleagues.

In spite of the Brahmin-Non-Brahmin controversy, about sixteen Brahmins were elected to the Legislative Council, all of them eminent lawyers from the city and the mofussil. Fortunately for all concerned, very cordial relations existed among the members of the House, irrespective of party, caste or creed. I remember some of us, younger members, used to meet these eminent gentlemen in the luncheon room and have very pleasant conversation with them.

PARLIAMENTARY CONVENTIONS

In the first Council itself, parliamentary conventions and traditions were created and followed. There was ministerial responsibility to the legislature and collective responsibility in the Cabinet. Throughout the period of dyarchy in Madras, meetings of the legislature were carried on in an orderly manner. Unparliamentary behaviour by members was almost unknown and dispersal of the council in pandemonium or disturbance of meeting by walk-out was unheard of

Visitors to India who attended the meetings of the Imperial Legislative Council at New Delhi used to pay a visit to Madras, as Madras was reputed for its observance of parliamentary procedure and conventions. They used to go back with a word of praise for the Madras Legislature. A great deal of credit for all these must go to Sir P. Rajagopalachariar, the first President, a born bureaucrat who became a fine parliamentarian overnight, so to speak. It used to be said of the British House of Commons that it was the best club in the world, because to an Englishman club life came next to home life in importance. I may say that Madras Legislative Council was in those days a miniature House of Commons. I consider the days I spent in the first Council as the best period of my public life.

In passing I may mention that in the mother of Parliaments, the members owe their allegiance and loyalty to the House irrespective of their party affiliations. Its presiding officer is styled as the speaker, and he maintains and upholds its dignity, prestige and traditions. The members in their turn pay their homage to the personality of the speaker and uphold his authority. Under his guidance democracy functions successfully in England.

PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Before referring to the next Council, I wish to say that I was the self-appointed whip of the party. The ministers and the party accepted this for the reason that at the time of division (voting) members have to be present lest there should be any snap or adverse voting. I prepared a draft for the constitution of an Executive Committee of the party and it was accepted. When the Committee started functioning, I was elected its Chairman in my capacity as whip. The Chairman's office was to be the link between the ministry and the party. It was agreed amongst the members that no one should absent himself without giving reason for it or leave the Council without permission, to avoid being taken unawares at the time of voting. As whip, I maintained strict discipline on the members and they accepted it cheerfully, though many of them were elders occupying important positions in Municipal Councils and Local Bodies. One exception to the rule was the leader, Sir P. Theagaroya Chettiar, because of his age. He would come to the Council in the morning (the Council used to meet at 11 A. M. and last till 5 P. M.) and remain there for an hour or so and then go to the Cosmopolitan Club for afternoon siesta. In the afternoons, he would attend the Council.

POLITICS AND STUDENTS

Even then the party disapproved of students taking part in non-co-operation movement and condemned indiscipline amongst them. From the very beginning the party wanted that law and order should be maintained at any cost as tranquility and peace was necessary for progress. Hence, it supported the police in the maintenance of law and order though this was a reserved subject. The party did not hesitate to condemn police excesses. We co-operated with the Reserved half and did not want to earn cheap kudos by adverse criticism of the police. The party was actuated by strong sense of duty and did not seek cheap notoriety, by use of slogans and catch phrases. As the partymen had a status and a stake in the country they gave a lead to the electorate and did not say or do anything merely to please the voters.

In the 1923 elections also, the party was returned to the legislature with a

majority. The old ministry continued with one change, Diwan Bahadur T. N. Sivagnanam Pillai replacing Sir K. V. Reddi Naidu. This change was due to the general feeling that the Tamilians were altogether neglected in the first ministry. There were members especially from the city who felt that they were better entitled to a place in the ministry than Diwan Bahadur T. N. Sivagnanam Pillai, a retired official. These disappointed members supported a no-confidence motion against the ministry and it was rejected.

IMPORTANT ACTS

It was in this Council a comprehensive Madras University Bill was passed. In 1924 the Andhra University Bill was passed. Both the Bills were piloted by Rao Bahadur A. P. Patro, Education Minister. In 1926 the Hindu Religious Endowments Bill was passed. There was fierce controversy over this Bill. Earlier attempts to introduce a Bill for the reform of Hindu Religious Endowments did not materialise somehow or other. Englishmen themselves felt that any attempt in that direction by them might be construed as interference with Hindu Religion. It was then left to the Raja of Panagal in the face of violent opposition from all sides, especially the vested interests as well as the Press, to introduce the Bill. The cry of religion in danger was raised and fully exploited. Nevertheless, he piloted the Bill through the Council successfully. Fortunately he had the loyal support of an able civilian official (Provincial Civil Service) in the person of Mr. N. Gopalaswami Iyengar who later became a minister of the Central Government. He was nominated as an 'expert member' to assist the minister in the Bill through. My uncle late Mr. M. T. Subramania Mudaliar was so much interested in the Bill that he did not give any respite to the younger members of the Council till it was passed. I myself had a tough time of it and I had to persuade other members to give an assurance to my uncle that they would support the Bill. The Raja of Panagal himself was so much impressed with the earnestness of my uncle that he also gave him his assurance for the passing of the Bill. The Bill was ultimately passed and became an Act in 1926. Sir T. Sadasiva Iyer. a retired Judge of the Madras High Court, was appointed the first President of the Hindu Religious Endowments Board. This appointment was meant to assure the orthodox section of the Hindu public that no radical changes would take place in the mode of worship, etc.

After the Andhra University Bill was passed, Tamilian members felt that there must be an University for the southern districts. One section of the members felt that the University should be only for the promotion of Tamil; the other section wanted that the University should serve the interest of Tamilnad. A Committee was appointed with the Raja of Ramnad as Chairman and myself as Secretary to go into the question of founding an University in the south. The recommendations of this Committee were considered by Dr. Subbaroyan, the then Chief Minister, and subsequently, the Annamalai University Bill was passed during his regime and became an Act.

ENTRY OF CONGRESS MEN INTO COUNCIL

In 1923, Mr. S. Satyamurti was elected to this Council as representative of the Madras University. I have already mentioned that members of the first Council got on very happily as members of a joint family. With the advent of Mr. Satyamurti into the Council, controversy replaced harmony. Though non-co-opera-

tion movement was at its height, the general public, the voters of Tamilnad, participated in the elections. The first Council got on smoothly and the second Council followed suit. This appeared to have upset Congressmen. They started a violent propaganda against the party. They were the fore-runners of Dr. Goebbels (Nazi minister for propaganda) and they expected that if they went on repeating a lie it would be believed by the people, ultimately. I wonder whether this kind of propaganda came to Goebbels as naturally as it came to our opponents here. Mr. Satyamurti had utter contempt for Non-Brahmins, because he felt that they were not clever. This contempt turned into hatred when he found that the party was running the administration successfully. This hatred was more against Non-Brahmins in general for their support to the party in the elections.

I was reminded of an incident mentioned to me some years ago that a member of the racing fraternity in Bombay who disliked someone else in that fraternity, purchased a horse of a sort and named it after his opponent. Under the guise of abusing the horse for bad running he really abused his opponent to get even with him. Likewise Mr. Satyamurti poured out all his venom on the Non-Brahmins in the guise of attacking the Justice Party. The party was condemned as being communal and the partymen were called job hunters, lackeys of British Imperialism, boot-lickers, traitors and toadies. They were also accused of being Brahmin haters. I cannot recall just now all the epithets hurled at us at that time. Mr. Satyamurti had stock phrases to fling at us—'The Bourbons can never unlearn old things and learn new ones'; 'They do not see the writing on the wall'; 'You can cheat some people for all time, all people for sometime but not all people for all time'. He did not realise that these words would sometime later recoil on his own party, the Congress.

At the time of 1937 elections, when the Congress was at the height of its propaganda, one of the leaders told the voters "If the Justice Party were to offer you money take it; if they offer you food eat it; if they offer you conveyance get into it, but vote for the Congress". At this distance of time I cannot lay my finger on the gentleman who gave this despicable advice. This cry was taken up by both educated and uneducated among them. These worthies did not realise that this reflected adversly on the moral character of the people. I knew that these gentlemen were innocent of moral values. They were hoist with their own petard in 1967 general elections. Mr. Satyamurti did not bother himself with the language he used. He said that he would bury the Justice Party so many fathoms deep. It is a pity he missed his vocation and undertook the undertaker's job. He did succeed in digging the grave, but did not realise that the grave was big enough to bury his own party later on. The crowning point of his parliamentary wisdom was his boast that the Congress would put up donkeys against Justice Party and would win hands down. These slogans were repeated by the lesser fry. In spite of his loose tongue, Mr. Satyamurti did not dare allege corruption against the Justice ministry or any member thereof. All these criticisms we ignored as their authors lacked in breeding. However, I have dealt with these items at length lest some unsuspecting ones of the future generation should

in their innocence believe all this trash about our party. We knew the patriotism of our critics was skin deep and their high sounding principles were more professed than practised. No doubt there were some real patriots and we raised our hats off to them, though we differed from them.

Dr. SUBBAROYAN MINISTRY

While I am at this, I wish to refer to one other matter. When in 1926 general elections, the Justice Party lost its majority, the question arose as to who should form the ministry. No one party had the requisite majority to form the ministry by itself. The Swarajya Party whose avowed object in entering the Council was to wreck the dyarchy within the Council and without, took the initiative in the formation of a ministry headed by Dr. Subbaroyan. Dr. Subbaroyan was weaned away from the Justice Party overnight and was chosen as Chief Minister. The Congressmen congratulated themselves on their clever move. They did not know that cleverness without character is worse than useless and often proves dangerous. It is my experience that such clever people come to grief more often than not. This move on the part of the Swarajists received support from Englishmen who were upset by the Indianisation of the Medical Department by the Raja of Panagal. Politics brings together strange bed fellows! The Swarajists did not realise that they had caught a tartar in Dr. Subbaroyan. They expected him to dance to their tune, but they were sorely disappointed soon. The duplicity played by the Congressmen and their allies in this nefarious act was not made known to All-India politicians. This was the beginning of the crossing of the floor in a legislature. Today the crossing of the floor has become a part of political game in all the legislatures.

I should have followed the British convention that the dead should be left alone by avoiding reference to Mr. Satyamurti's antics. I have nothing against him and he has done me no harm. I could not however ignore his role as a political critic. It should also be remembered here that he was virtually the leader of the Madras Congress Party from 1923 till Rajaji formed his ministry in 1937. When considering the political role of any person and assessing his worth, history does not care whether such person is alive or dead.

Dr. Subbaroyan chose Messrs. A. Ranganatha Mudaliar and R. N. Arogyasami Mudaliar as his colleagues. These two gentlemen were the nominees of the Swarajya Party. When the Simon Commission visited India, the Congress boycotted it. When it came to Madras, the Swarajists who expected Dr. Subbaroyan to boycott the Commission found him receiving the Commission with open arms, much to their chagrin. There was an additional reason for Dr. Subbaroyan to receive the Commission as Sir John Simon and he belonged to the same college at Oxford—Wadham. It was only then that the Swarajists realised that they had overreached themselves. Cleverness has become the curse of this country as clever people cannot see beyond their nose. Messrs. Ranganatha Mudaliar and Arogyasami Mudaliar resigned from the ministry.

It was at this juncture that Dr. Subbaroyan turned to the Raja of Panagal and asked him for his support. If he had not received this support, he would have

had to resign his Chief Ministership. The Raja of Panagal agreed to support him and even went to the length of accepting Dr. Subbaroyan's suggestion that I should be one of his colleagues. I was upset with the Raja Saheb for having given his consent even without consulting me. Though I did not want to join the ministry, I agreed to full support being given to Dr. Subbaroyan. At my suggestion, Mr. W. P. A. Soundara Pandian agreed to be Dr. Subbaroyan's whip.

We suggested to Dr. Subbaroyan the names of Messrs. S. Muthiah Mudaliar and M. R. Sethurathinam Iyer as his colleagues. The latter name was suggested as there was no Brahmin in the Cabinet at that time. I may add that Mr. Sethurathinam Iyer was popular with our partymen. Mr. T. R. Venkatrama Sastri who had been appointed as a member of the Executive Council in the vacancy caused by the retirement of Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, had resigned his office in a huff because the police portfolio which was with Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer was not assigned to him. Some of Mr. Sastri's friends tried to persuade him not to resign but he ignored their advice. In his place Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nair was appointed Law Member without the police portfolio which was assigned to Sir Mohamed Usman. Incidentally I may mention that a no-confidence motion moved by the Swarajists against Dr. Subbaroyan ministry was thrown out by the Council. By extending our support to the Subbaroyan ministry, we enjoyed influence without the responsibilities of office. More than that we were anxious that the Governor's rule should not be imposed on Madras on the score of the failure of the constitutional machinery.

COMMUNAL G. O.

It was during Dr. Subbaroyan's ministry that the Communal G. O. was introduced by Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliar giving adequate representation to the several communities in government service. In working out this G. O. it was found that it caused hardship in the case of promotions from one cadre to another. If I remember right when this was later brought to my notice as minister, I suggested to government that the application of this rule in the case of promotion might be dispensed with and any imbalance in the next cadre might be rectified by direct recruitment. This suggestion was accepted.

Dr. Subbaroyan piloted the Annamalai University Bill which became an Act in 1929. It will be interesting to know that the Annamalai University has provided two ministers to the Government of Madras and one to the Malaysian Government in the persons of Messrs. V. R. Nedunchezhian and K. A. Mathiazhagan and Datto V. T. Sambandan. Mr. K. Anbazhagan, another alumnus, is the leader of the D. M. K. in Parliament.

LOSS OF THE PARTY LEADERS

In the course of four years the party sustained great loss by the passing away of Sir P. Theagaroya Chettiar on 29—6—1925 and the Raja of Panagal on 15—12—1928.

Sir P. Theagaroya Chettiar was the grand-old-man of Madras and the Nestor of the Justice Party. His family was an old and respected one and it kept an open house. Its hospitality was extended to all irrespective of caste or creed. His services to the public cost him his fortune. Till the end of his

life he served the people. May his soul rest in peace.

The Raja of Panagal was the scion of an aristocratic family in Kalahasti in Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh. He had no connection with local bodies which constituted the training ground and stepping-stone into the legislature in those days, but he had practical experience gained in the hard school of realities in life. Being an astute person he utilised the opportunities given him as a minister and made his mark. He became a mature politician and an able administrator. He was a good chess player. These qualities helped him to attain a mental equilibrium which stood him in good stead at times of strain and stress. His unique headgear—the blue silk cap—gave him stature and a distinguished appearance. The sum total of his mental and moral qualities gave him a poise in life. He devoted his whole time for the party and lived for it. His innate sense of loyalty drew around him loyal men. In fine he came to be known as a statesman and a gentleman. As Chief Minister, he was unique. Apart from chess, racing was another recreation of his. He used to bet but he was not a gambler. He seldom won in the races. I have followed him in racing and my luck has been no better.

It was a disadvantage for Dr. Subbaroyan to have succeeded such an eminent Chief Minister as the Raja of Panagal. Being a poor speaker, he cultivated a mannerism—pulling out his handkerchief from his pocket every alternate minute, twisting it in his finger and putting it back. In course of time he turned out to be a fine parliamentary speaker. He got on well in the Council. He had the saving grace of not having harmed any of his opponents. Dr. Subbaroyan was an interesting conversationalist. He could be entertaining in any company, if he wished to be. Though we parted company in politics, we remained friends to the very last.

Sometime after the death of the Raja of Panagal, I suggested in my capacity as Chairman of the Party's Executive Committee that a Confederation be convend for the purpose of electing a new leader. Members suggested that I could carry on as I did till then. Being the chief whip of the party, I said I could not act as the Floor Leader of the House. It was then suggested that Sir A. P. Patro should be the Floor Leader. This temporary arrangement was made to avoid competition for leadership by some persons who were not in the good grace of the party. This arrangement had unfortunately its repercussions on subsequent events.

PARTY CONFEDERATION

The Nellore Confederation met in 1929 and my name was proposed for the leadership. Unexpectedly Dr. Subbaroyan wanted to contest the leadership on the score that he was practically a Justicite in view of the then existing relationship between his group and the Justice Party in the legislature. Despite his claim being a novel one, I was prepared to step down to avoid contest. But the delegates, especially those coming from the southern districts, did not want Dr. Subbaroyan's leadership. As a compromise Mr. B. Muniswami Naidu of Chittoor was elected leader and it was decided that he should continue as such till the next Confederation met. If

I had insisted upon the election of a leader, immediately after the death of the Raja of Panagal, the chances were that Dr. Subbaroyan might not have contested and Mr. B. Muniswami Naidu would not have been elected leader. There would have been no necessity for a Confederation either at Nellore or Tanjore.

MUNISWAMI NAIDU MINISTRY

The fourth general election did not take place in 1929 as the Round Table Conference was expected to take place in 1930. When elections took place in 1930, the Justice Party was returned in large numbers. The ministry was formed with Mr. B. Muniswami Naidu as Chief Minister and Mr. S. Kumaraswamy Reddiar and myself as his colleagues. Immediately after the formation of the ministry, those who expected to be included in it were greatly disappointed with Mr. B. Muniswami Naidu at their omission. As the Conference was not held at the end of the year as decided at Nellore and as there was delay in convening it, Mr. Muniswami Naidu became unpopular with certain sections of the party. When the Confederation met at Tanjore there were wranglings, bickerings and quarrels about the choice of the leader. Because of these it was not possible to have a unanimous choice. Only after great deal of troubles, Raja of Bobbili was elected leader.

RAJA OF BOBBILI MINISTRY

After the conference was over, the Governor called upon the new leader, the Raja of Bobbili, to form the ministry. Accordingly a new ministry was formed with the Raja of Bobbili as the Chief Minister and myself and Mr. Kumaraswamy Reddiar as his colleagues. The following important portfolios were assigned to us. Local Boards, Religious Endowments, Medical and Public Health were assigned to Raja of Bobbili; Education, Industries and Fisheries to Mr. S. Kumaraswamy Reddiar; Co-operation, Agriculture, Veterinary, Registration and Public Works were assigned to me.

The Tanjore Confederation was a most unfortunate episode in the history of the party. As it left a bitter taste in my mouth, I did not wish to continue as a minister but had to yield to the pressure of partymen from the south.

Even before the Tanjore Confederation, I wanted to leave the ministry on account of an incident that took place at Madurai. In the District Board there was a contest for Presidentship. Later Mr. Foulkes was elected with the majority of one vote as President, and that too with the active assistance of local officials. There was some trouble about his continuance as President. At the instance of local officials, the Governor wanted me to interfere in this matter. I did not relish the Governor's interference in local politics and so wanted to resign after giving him a bit of my mind. As there was no need for my interference, I did not resign.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PARTY

From 1920 onward, the Transferred half was entrusted with the administration of vital departments like Education, Agriculture, Co-operation; Industries, Medicine and Public Health. These departments required funds for effecting improvements. As the Finance portfolio was in the Reserved half, it was very difficult for the ministers to obtain adequate funds for the expanding needs

of these departments. We had to be content with what was given by the Finance member.

University and secondary education produced efficient subordinates and not leaders. As radical changes in the educational policy were likely to meet with opposition from vested interests and as there were not sufficient funds, we followed the policy of *laissez faire*. Fortunately the Justice Party did not tinker with education but left to its successors the task of introducing necessary changes. Today neither the Centre nor the State has any settled policy and programme about education. It has merely become a question of hand to mouth existence.

As regards industries we could not go in for a comprehensive planned programme, due to want of funds. As regards agriculture we did effect changes to help the ryots for adopting new and profitable methods of cultivation. As regards the veterinary department, we arranged for the preparation of serum and other medicines ourselves to meet our livestocks' requirements and took steps to improve the livestock. Special attention was devoted to the development of fisheries, both inland and marine.

Great attention was devoted to fostering and developing of indigenous systems of medicine. A school of Indian Medicine was started by the Raja of Panagal. Research work was done in Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani Systems of medicine. Within the limitation of Finance inherent in the system of dyarchy, the ministry strove hard to make available to the people at large the benefits arising from the development departments.

There remains the co-operative department. In the early stages, societies were registered in large numbers. Every Registrar added to the number. It was more the quantity than quality that counted then. I had to face the very serious problem of either mending or ending the department. It was a question of rectification and consolidation or liquidation of the movement. Certainly I did not want to take the odium of liquidating the department though the then Règistar was indifferent about it. I mooted the subject with Mr. H.M. Hood, I. C. S., the then Finance Secretary as he himself had been once a Registrar of Co-operative Societies. He told me that the liquidation of the department was unthinkable. Then I decided on the policy of rectification and consolidation. In passing, I may mention that the district officers of the co-operative department were borrowed from the Revenue department and by the time they had learned the work they were sent back to their parent department. I put an end to this unsatisfactory procedure by having a cadre of officers permenantly for the department. The new recruits proved themselves worthy of the task entrusted to them. Registrars were generally recruited from the Indian or Provincial Civil Service. Three of the recruits from the new cadre constituted for the co-operative department became permanent Registrars. Punjab and Madras were noted for their excellence in the co-operative field. Madras is now the only State where the co-operative department is functioning effectively. People from other States and also from outside India come to Madras to see the working of the co-operative movement here.

1937 ELECTIONS

As I said, violent propaganda had been carried on against the Justice Party

and it reached its height in 1937. The constituencies instead of being on the district basis were reduced to smaller units. I contested the election from the Periyakulam Constituency. Voters there told me not to contest then for the reason that the Congress Party had promised to abolish land tax and allow people to enter the forest area and carry fuel and manure as much as they needed, free of charge, and that if the Justice Party was again returned, they would not have these benefits. They further told me that if I still persisted in standing for election I might seek election as an independent candidate. I told them that the promises held out to them by the Congress were absolutely false and that the Congress wanted to get elected by cheating the voters. I also told them that I was standing on the Justice Party ticket and that I would not desert my party for the sake of a seat in the Legislative Council. I told them that they should vote for me on my own terms or else they could please themselves. In this election itself coloured boxes were allotted to the parties. Yellow was assigned to the Congress and red to the Justice party. The Congress had the slogan: "மஞ்சள் பெட்டி மாங்கல்யப் பெட்டி; அதற்கு உங்கள் ஓட்டைப் போடுங்கள். சிகப்புப் பெட்டி அபாயப் பெட்டி; அதற்கு ஓட்டுப் போடாதீர்கள்."

Till this day the promises made by them to the electorate have not been fulfilled. And yet the Congressmen today accuse the D. M. K. as having given false promises in the last general elections. The Congressmen have a convenient memory and so forget their promises. As a result of the false propaganda of the Congress, only a few of the candidates were returned on the Justice Party ticket in the 1937 elections I was one of the many that were defeated. It was indeed a debacle for the party. I knew then that there would be retribution some time or other, and it took 30 years for that retribution to come. It was well worth waiting.

1967 ELECTIONS

In 1967 elections, the electorate which believed all the allegations made by the Congressmen in 1937 against Justice Party, treated the tall claims of Congressmen with contempt and dismissed them without any compunction. Their defeat was even more miserable than the defeat of the Justice Party in 1937. The final blow came to them in the bye-election to Parliament from South Madras Constituency. All the big Congressmen mustered in large numbers and turned their guns on young Murasoli Maran to defeat him. Contrary to their hopes and expectations, Maran won hands down. His majority was even greater than Mr. Annadurai's in the previous election. This signal victory avenged the defeat of Mr. Annadurai at Conjeevaram in 1962. In South Madras, the Congressmen met their Waterloo. With a chastened frame of mind brought about by the many defeats, the Congressmen may perhaps turn a new leaf. If they do so, they may serve the country better by talking less and doing more.

ENTRY OF PERIYAR INTO THE PARTY.

After the elections of 1937, Raja of Bobbili thinking that want of mass contact was responsible for the rout of the party, requested Mr. E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker to undertake the work. To enable him to carry out this programme, the Raja Saheb entrusted the

Tamil Daily "Dravidan" and the Press to him. An interim ministry was formed under the leadership of Sir K. V. Reddi, as the Congress had not made up its mind to accept the responsibility of running the government. When the Congress decided to accept office, Rajaji formed the ministry. He introduced compulsory Hindi in schools. This, the Justice Party opposed tooth and nail. As a result of their opposition about 1000 people including women were sent to imprisonment. Mr. E. V. R. himself was sent to jail.

In 1938, a party Confederation met at Madras. Mr. E. V. R. was to have presided. As he was in jail, his presidential address was read by Sir A. T. Panneerselvam and Mr. K. A. P. Viswanathan. When the Second World War commenced, the Rajaji ministry resigned and Advisers' regime succeeded the Congress Ministry. It was during this regime that compulsory Hindi was withdrawn. At the Confederation held at Tiruvarur in 1940, Mr. E. V. R. was elected leader of the party.

At the Conference held at Salem in 1944, a resolution changing the name of the party as "Dravida Kazhagam" was passed. Partymen who were dissatisfied with the change of name of the Party walked out of the Conference.

1945 CONFERENCE

These partymen met at a Conference in 1945 at Madras and elected me as leader of the Party. I accepted the responsibility as no one came forward to shoulder the leadership. From 1937, I had not been actively associating myself with the party and when the war was declared, I did work as leader of National War Front in Tamilnad. It 1946, when elections took place, the Justice party did not take part in them. The Congress contested and came out successful and Mr. T. Prakasam formed the ministry.

1952 ELECTIONS

In 1952, general elections took place. After 14 years in the wilderness, the party decided to set up candidates then. In that election I contested and came out successful. Our propaganda had some effect in North Arcot and Salem Districts only. It had no effect in Andhra, Malabar or South Canara Districts. Of the contestants in North Arcot and Salem, about ten came out successful. Contrary to my expectation and surprise they had declared themselves as Independents even at the time of nomination. When I pleaded with them later on and persuaded them to declare themselves as partymen at least then, they did not respond to my request. So I declared myself as the sole representative of the party in the House. I was happy I did not succeed in persuading them to declare themselves as Justicites as weak partymen and doubtful friends would not have enhanced the prestige of the party.

The 1952 assembly was a unique one. It was elected on the basis of adult franchise under the new Constitution. The Congress was in minority and the Opposition groups in majority. The Congress could not find any one to lead the party in the Assembly and form the ministry. The Chief Minister's post went abegging. As there was no outstanding leader among the Opposition groups, there was no unity among them. Each group tried for the Chief Minister's place and failed. Seeing that the

Congress thought it could form the ministry. They had the good sense to go and ask Rajaji to come out of his retirement and form the ministry though they were in a minority. Rajaji was appointed Chief Minister. When the Governor came to address the joint session of the legislature, Mr. T. Prakasam stood up to prevent the Governor from addressing the meeting. Being seated next to him I was tempted to pull him up. But I did not do so as I feared that the situation might become worse. Any how, things passed off without further trouble.

RAJAJI

From the beginning Rajaji's presence was felt in the House. He prefaced his reply on the motion of thanks to the Governor, with the remark that he was enemy of the communists and that they were his enemy No. 1. There was pin drop silence. I expected the communists to protest against this statement. But the communist party remained silent. It was a victory for Rajaji. Rajaji was in offiice for about a year when the Congress Party opposed his education scheme. When I pointed out in a speech elsewhere that Rajaji was not fit to be a Chief Minister, he was very much upset. When he mentioned it to me I told him that I said what I felt and that it was not meant to be a condemnation.I said that he could be a chief adviser or a minister to King Dasaratha of old and not to be a Chief Minister as he had not the necessary patience for dealing with party members. I welcomed his retirement from the Chief Minister's place. I felt that for him the Chief Minister's office was like a bird in a cage and that he had not the necessary freedom he most desired. I had a shrewed suspicion that he was destined to be something greater than what he had been and that his real contribution would come only thereafter.

Rajaji, though not an orator, is an effective speaker, the like of whom I am yet to come across. If any one other than Rajaji had formed the ministry, he and his colleagues would have been driven from pillar to post by the opposition groups.

When the Andhras got a separate State, they wanted to remain in Madras as a temporary measure till they got their own capital. In reply to this, Rajaji said that they should remain with us permanently or get out of Madras bag and baggage. They left Madras and went to Kurnool.

I would not be surprised if the failure of the opposition groups in the Madras Assembly to function effectively as an opposition party had something to do with his resolve to create an effective single party opposition in the Centre as well as in the States. He took some time to organise the Swatantra Party and it contested the 1962 elections. It then got a footing in the legislature and in 1967 elections. it came out in large numbers. This enabled the party to play an effective role in the Centre as well as in different States.

He was solely responsible for the creation of the Swatantra Party thus making democracy safe for India. Besides he could forecast coming events as a result of his wide experience. Coming to his personality, he was like Marcus Aurelius, a great stoic philosopher. He is a man of very simple habits, of great integrity and spotless character. He is one of the few who still maintain old time courtesies.

Love for money and luxury, he spurns. His remarkable career has brought all round credit to Tamilnad and we should all feel proud of him.

1957 ELECTIONS

In the 1957 election, I contested but was defeated. It was in this election that the D. M. K. put up candidates. I helped them as much as I could and I was in close touch with them. In this election I made no attempt whatsoever to put up candidates as the generation which constituted the Justice Party had practically disappeared.

I regret to have to state that even the sons of old partymen did not adopt Justice Party label because being young-men they did not know the worth of the party. As such, I could not have possibly expected others to come forward and contest on the party ticket.

It was during this time I was elected to the Legislative Council from the Assembly as both the D. M. K. and Congress supported my candidature. I thanked them profusely for the signal courtesy.

REPLY TO ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE PARTY

Now I would like to meet some of the allegations made against us by the Congress. It was said that the party was based on hatred of the Brahmin, when in fact, it had not been so. At the time when the very controversial Hindu Religious Endowments Bill was considered by the legislature, the party had the benefit of the services of a Brahmin as the 'expert member' to advise the minister, as stated elsewhere. He was the late N. Gopalaswami Iyengar. In this context I must refer to his services and that of Mr. S. V. Ramamurthi as my Secretaries. Mr. Ramamurthi acted as Director of Agriculture also. I could not have had more capable and loyal men than these two.

Another instance: I was asked to preside over the first meeting of the newly elected Assembly in 1952 for the swearing-in of members. It was as an act of courtesy that the invitation was extended to me by Rajaji. I was then celebrating my sixty-first birthday. When I went to thank Rajaji later on, he did me the honour of asking me to join his ministry. While expressing my gratitude for his mark of esteem towards me, I did not accept the offer. These would show that they did not think that the party hated Brahmins.

The charge that the party hated the Brahmins was trumped up by the Congressmen. Some Brahmin members exaggerated it hoping that doing so would be to their advantage. Hatred has never been in our blood. These wise men do not realise that hate injures the hater more than it does the hated one. Hate clouds their judgement and leads them astray.

"நோயெல்லாம் நோய் செய்தார்
மேலவாம்
நோய் செய்யார் நோயின்மை
வேண்டுபவர்."

Suspicion, a lesser evil than hate, can harm a man as much as hate itself. Suspicion for instance has caused Mr. M. Bhakthavatsalam, noted for his sobriety and level-headedness, untold harm. When the Government of India announced its intention to declare Hindi as official language of India on the 26th Januray, 1965, a meeting was convened at Tiruchirapalli by Mr. K. A. P. Viswanathan to protest against the introduction

of Hindi. I remember that Rajaji, Messrs. G. D. Naidu, Karumuthu Thiagaraja Chettiar, Mookiah Thevar, Mohamed Ismail Sahib, S. P. Adityan, V. R. Nedunchezhian and myself took a leading part at that meeting. We expressed our strong opposition to the introduction of Hindi and further observed that its introduction on the day of celebration of the Republic Day would prevent many from taking part in it.

ANTI-HINDI AGITATION

Students started demonstrating against the introduction of Hindi, even before 26th January, 1965. I learned that the students of Madurai took out a procession in a peaceful manner along the streets of Madurai. On their way to the meeting place, the peaceful processionists were assaulted by some Congressmen in front of the Congress office. Students in other districts condemned this incident and they too started an agitation against the government. Action taken by the police against the demonstrating students, made matters worse. Government took action against Mr. Viswanathan and some of the Dailies, on the ground that they egged on the students to demonstrate against the introduction of Hindi.

Mr. Bhakthavatsalam suspected that the D. M. K. was responsible for the students' demonstration. If the students had been handled with tact, many of the subsequent events might have been avoided. I pointed out to Mr. Bhakthavatsalam that the anti-Hindi demonstration was spontaneous on the part of the students and that the D. M. K. was not responsible for the students' stir. This was not believed by Mr. Bhakthavatsalam. He persisted in his suspicion against the D. M. K. and as it grew worse his wonted composure deserted him with serious consequences to himself.

In his long career as a Minister, Mr. Bhakthavatsalam was in charge of every department of the government and earned the reputation of being a far-sighted politician and able administrator, capable of dealing with men and matters effectively and successfully. There was none to equal him either in this State or in any other State in India. His failure to deal with the anti-Hindi agitation lost him the great name he had earned for himself in the public life of this country.

Referring to the charge that the Justicites are yesmen and toadies, the following instances will prove the the falseness of the allegation.

When the Duke of Connaught visited Madras for the inauguration of the Legislative Council under the Montague-Chelmsford scheme, he was to have been received at the Madras Port by Diwan Bahadur P. Theagaroya Chettiar in his capacity as the President of the Madras Corporation. He was given a hint that he should wear white trousers, long black coat and the usual head-gear prescribed for the Indians for such occasions. He said that if this was insisted upon he would ask the Deputy President to read the address. On an after-thought, the government agreed to his wearing his usual dress—white dhoti, long white coat and white turban with lace border. Though the dress was a simple one it added to the dignity of the proceedings as could be seen from the photograph of the function.

At a Confederation of the party held at Coimbatore, a resolution for the recall of the then Governor Lord

Goschen was moved, for his having appointed as Chief Minister, Dr. Subbaroyan, who had no following to support him in the Council. The matter was discussed and strong resentment was expressed. As this was considered sufficient, the resolution was not pressed.

On one occasion when I recommended the appointment of a particular person as head of a department in my charge, the Executive Council member in charge of the services interfered and recommended the name of an Englishman. When the file went to the Governor (Lord Erskine), he sent for me in view of the difference of opinion between me and the member in charge of services. When I explained to the Governor that there was nothing to choose between the two and that my recommendation was based on the seniority of my nominee, the Governor accepted my recommendation without hesitation. I was prepared to hand in my resignation if the other candidate was preferred to mine, though this contingency did not arise. Thus it is seen that all these allegations had no basis. I can now only say even as Jesus said "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do".

Apart from Lord Willingdon, of the Governors the party had to deal with, Lord Erskine had a mind and will of his own. I was reliably informed that when Lord Erskine recommended my name for knighthood, some civilian opposed it. The Governor cooly snubbed him and ignored his interference. The title came to me unasked for and went away unregretted with the Britisher when he left India for good. I may add that a quaint ceremony is attached to this title which is the oldest in Britain. The person who is honoured kneels before the king and the king puts his sword on his shoulders and says "Sir, so and so, rise". In India this ceremony is performed by the Governor-General (Viceroy) as representative of the king. This title cannot be resigned but its holder can be deprived of it for treason or for some grave crime against the State.

THE CONGRESS

The Congress was founded in 1885. Some of the founders were Englishmen. After having gone through very many vicissitudes, it came under the control of Mahathma Gandhi in 1921. He was virtually the leader of the Congress from then onwards, though at times Gandhiji used to say that he was not even a four-anna member of the Congress. Before the partition was effected, Gandhiji advised Congressmen not to agree to it. These Congress leaders did not listen to his advice. Division of the country into two became fait *accompli* later.

One thing India lacked throughout its history is leadership and this became very apparent after Independence. When general elections took place in 1947, Gandhiji is said to have advised Congressmen not to contest elections in the name of the Congress. Till then, he said, Congress was a national organisation. If elections were to take place new parties should come up and the elections should be fought on their own programme. Congressmen did not listen to Gandhiji's advice as they wanted to exploit his name and the name of the Congress in the elections. On top of it all, they said that it was the Congress that achieved Independence. They forgot for the moment that the Englishmen went away in 1947, one year earlier than the date fixed for their departure. Lord Mount-

batten when he failed to bring about an understanding between Congress and the League divided the country into two, and gave an ultimatum to the two parties, saying 'Take it or leave it. I have made up my mind to quit this country whatever be your decision'. Mr. Jinnah jumped at the offer. Likewise, Congressmen who had been proclaiming from housetops that India was one country and one nation, accepted the partition. Who betrayed the country? Surely not the Justice Party; but our patriots-the Congressmen. The Congress had not the intelligence to foresee the consequences of loose thinking and loose speaking; neither did it have the magnanimity nor the humility that go with greatness. It assumed unto itself all the virtues one could imagine while denying them to non-Congressmen. When the Constitution of India was drafted they converted their own party into a Constituent Assembly and did not invite other parties to become members thereof. They went even to the extent of treating non-Congressmen as political outcasts. Their professions and practices did not go together. The Congressmen's insistent harping on the majority having its last say in any matter, frightened the League. It felt that it would be nowhere if numbers alone counted. Hence it claimed a separate state for itself and Congressmen agreed To it. **Sic transit gloria Indica**. Thus passed away the glory of India. The Congressmen to hide their folly made the Englishmen the scapegoat for the partition.

CONGRESS'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS OPPOSITION

The Congressmen paid lip servicc to the need for opposition parties in the legislature. Nevertheless they concentrated their full force against Mr, C. N. Annadurai in the Conjeevaram election in 1962. He was defeated but his party strength rose from 15 to 52. Man proposes, God disposes. Mr. Annadurai was elected to the Rajya Sabha by his own partymen from the Madras Assembly. If Congressmen had not interfered, Conjeevaram would have returned him to Madras Assembly. He would then be chewing his betel leaves as usual and with true oriental indifference to punctuality, would be addressing his 'Thambis' in some nook or corner of Tamilnad at odd hours. On the other hand he soon made a name for himself in Delhi and became a national leader with the possibilities of becoming an international one.

The Congress which did away with the hereditary character of men and institutions in India sought to give hereditary tenure to its own rule. As a result of 20 years in office the officials came to look upon the ministers as their masters when as a matter of fact they should have conducted themselves only as the servants of the public. The government is different from the ministry. The government is a continuing one and the ministry is a changing one. One reason for my wish for the defeat of the Congress was that if they were returned again, these publicservants would be converted into servants of the ministers.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the leader of the Congress Party and Prime Minister of India. Though he called himself a democrat, he allowed personality cult to grow up in his party. No one dared to oppose him. After Sardar Patel's death, people asked who was going to succeed Pandit Nehru. That

remained unanswered till his death. Sardar Patel proved his worth as a statesman by integrating the princely states with India. No one else could have accomplished this even though many might have thought of it. Sardar Patel did not want to alienate the princes by this policy of integration. He placated them in a way by giving them compensation. He allowed them to keep private properties and gave them annuities. Recently the Government of India, at the instance of the Congress, wanted to deprive the princes of these concessions. If the threats of abolition of annuities and other concessions were to materialise, people would have no faith in the word of the government and the government is likely to lose even the little respect which it now commands from the public. In 1967 all the claims of the Congress for its superiority over others and its exclusive knowledge of state-craft were knocked on the head by the electorate and they met with miserable defeat.

JUSTICE PARTY AND THE CONGRESS

Comparisons are no doubt odious but in the present context they cannot unfortunately be avoided. The Justice Party was in power for 17 years, when their power was limited and the finance was even more limited. It started with the idea of preparing cross section of the society for running the administration of the country. There was all round progress in the State during this period. Some communities utilised the opportunities to the full, while others did not. Nevertheless their sense of inferiority complex disappeared and the younger generation acquired self-confidence and self-reliance. History of this period may be said to be the history of Madras. At the end of its rule the party left an administration which was at once the envy and admiration of all other States in India. Justice pary is an oasis in the arid political desert in India. Madras enjoyed a reputation for administrative efficiency and honesty in public life.

Succesful working of dyarchy on Parliamentary lines in Madras was a wonder to many. It aroused the curiosity of Americans so much that a number of people have been engaging themselves to get at the reason for this. It is said that while Madras was willing to work the dyarchy, other States aimed at wrecking it both from within and without. This wrecking mentality continued even after India attained independence. As they had not cultivated a sense of responsibility, their ministers failed in running the administration on right lines. The Parliamentary system of government was borrowed from England. Their Constitution grew with the time and the people grew with the Constitution. A necessary background was created for the efficient functioning of the government. We borrowed their Constitution but not their background. That is why Parliamentary Democracy is said to be unsuited to the country. In the case of Tamilians, however, there is similarity between them and Englishmen, though the background as obtained in England is absent here.

England being an island, it became a maritime race and a great one at that. Though Tamilnad is a part of the mainland of India, her people were great seafarers once upon a time. Tamil literature has asked people to sail the seven

seas and seek their fortune. "திரை கடலோடியும் திரவியம் தேடு". Accordingly her boats sailed as far as Rome and Greece in the West and China in the East thus establishing commerce and trade relations with countries in the West and East.

When the sea is calm sailing becomes pleasant. When the sea becomes rough, merciless waves toss the boats about here and there and the job of protecting the boats becomes a difficult one. When storms and cyclones occur, the job becomes even more difficult.

As perils of the sea are greater than those of the land stern qualities are called for in men—courage, fortitude, coolness and sacrifice. Discipline and team spirit become inevitable. In those days passengers had to cultivate these qualities to some extent. The sea has endowed the people with self-reliance, sobriety and a sense of responsibility. Though the Tamilians had fallen on evil days, their successors have inherited some of these qualities. These qualities stood them in good stead when called upon to run the ship of state. This may perhaps explain the successful working of Dyarchy then. The credit for this should go to the people.

It may be interesting to know that the British sailors have created a code of conduct when their boats meet with grave danger. Women and children are first to go into life boats, then men, sailors, officers and lastly the captain. Generally the captains go down with their boats even if there is a chance for them to save their lives. When the Titanic disaster took place one lady refused to leave her husband and went with him when his turn came to get into the life-boat. What has been acquired by the British soldier as a result of long tradition in the sea the Japanese sailors acquired this practice as a result of self imposed discipline. I was told by Mr. P. R. Chari, the second son of the late Sir P. Rajagopalachariar that his father returned to India during the first great war in a Japanese boat. That boat was torpedoed in the Mediteranean sea and the passengers were saved from being drowned by the sailors.

20 YEARS RULE OF THE CONGRESS

Talking of the Congress and its rule of 20 years, let us examine its achievement. In the home front it wanted to achieve self-sufficiency in food, clothing and housing. In the matter of foreign policy it wanted non-alignment and non-intervention. By this policy Congress expected to please other nations and secure safeguard and immunity from external agression for our country. When our country was attacked by China in 1962, no country came to our rescue except Malaysia. It was a solitary instance of a country openly proclaiming support for us. Malaysia never received any benefit from us, whereas other countries that were benefited by our open sympathy and help, stood by merely as spectators. Though Malaysia is a small country its people are really great.

As regards Hindi being the national language, this very Important question was decided by the casting vote of the President of the Constituent Assembly. In spite of the assurarces given by Pandit Nehru that English would be the associate language as long as non-Hindi States want it, attempts have been made to force this language on unwilling States. If this object is going to be achieved merely on

the strength of brute majority in Parliament, it will be only at the cost of the unity of India. Till recently it was said that it was only Madras that opposed Hindi. In Andhra Pradesh and Mysore opposition to Hindi has taken a more violent turn than in Tamilnad. It may be mentioned that these two States are run by the Congress ministers. I may perhaps be permitted to say that the attitude of the people of Mysore and Andhra towards Hindi may be the beginning of the Federation of Southern States visualised by the founders of the Justice Party.

FRAGMENTATION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Agricultural policy in the Centre and State led to the policy of fixing ceilings on agricultural holdings resulting in fragmentation of lands and diminished production. I cautioned Mr. Bhakthavatsalam who was then in charge of agriculture that this policy would dislocate the rural economy of the country. Big land holders should be allowed to cultivate on a large and intensive scale and if they failed to do so, their lands, I said, might be resumed even without payment of compensation. This caution was not heeded to and the policy of fragmentation was persisted with. One acre and a cow for an individual is no doubt good as an ideal but as a practical proposition to solve the food problem in the country, it leads nowhere. We have been, as a matter of fact, depending upon other countries for our food all these years after Independence.

The Congress during its regime has failed to maintain law and order. There is no safety of life or security of property in the country. Cost of living has been going up by leaps and bounds. The promises of the Centre to check the cost of living have not materialised in any tangible form. These promises remained a pious hope only. After 20 years of rule, the Congress has left the country thoroughly demoralised.

1967 ELECTIONS AND D. M. K.

In 1967 elections, the D. M. K. was returned in large numbers to the Assembly. They increased their strength from 52 to 150. It was a case of the table being turned as the Congress from its strength of 150 came down to 50. The D. M. K. as a single largest party formed the ministry with Annadurai as Chief Minister and eight others as his colleagues. All his colleagues are capable men. In the case of ministers in other States the number varies from 20 to 30. It may be interesting to note as mentioned already that Annadurai after his defeat at Conjeevaram was elected to the Rajya Sabha by his partymen from the Madras Legislaure. His stay at Delhi and contact with leaders of parties and other leading men gave him new experience, wider and larger outlook. To put it briefly, Annadurai discovered himself and the new Annadurai was a revelation to many. Even during the elections one could get glimpses of his leadership. He brought together various heterogenous groups and formed a united front for defeating the Congress party and succeeded. It must be remembered that he had the strong backing of Rajaji in this matter. Mr. Annadurai's unexpected success and the adulation of his partymen did not turn his head. The memory of the shabby treatment by Congressmen did not make him bittter, nor did iron enter his soul. Overawed, perhaps, by the great responsibilities attached to the office of the Chief Minister he called on all the important leaders of Congress in

Madras. He requested their advice and co-operation in runing the administration. Being generous himself he expected generous response from these leaders. They gave him half-hearted response, which meant really nothing, as they did not have any sense of magnanimity about them. Mr. Annadurai though he belongs to D. M. K., is the Chief Minister of Tamilnad and as such the people of Tamilnad are entitled to look up to him as much as his own partymen. Congress made the mistake of identifying the Chief Ministers with their party and not the government. I would like the D. M. K. not to commit the very same mistake. People expected that as a result of Mr. Annadurai's assumption of office democray will function properly. That expectation will materialise provided his party gave him a free hand in running the administration.

STUDENT PROBLEM

Students indiscipline is agitating the minds of not only the parents but also of politicians and governments, Centre and the States. This legacy has been left to us by the Congress from the days of non-co-operation movement when boycott of schools and colleges was included in their programme of triple boycott. Indiscipline of one generation affects at least the two following generations. Hindi brought this problem to the fore. This has resulted in the lowering of standards not only in schools and colleges and government services, but also in public life. Every party cries hoarse that students should be kept out of politics and political parties should not interfere with them. It merely turned out to be a pious hope as no honest attempt was made to give effect to their declaration. Students themselves did not realise the serious consequences to themselves and the country. The part played by the students in Indonesia has possibly encouraged and emboldened them to come out openly as budding politicians. They have now attached themselves to different political parties. They were once an asset to the political parties and now they have become a problem. Confronted with the serious character and development of the student movement, the parties have at least agreed to ask the students to go back to schools and colleges. I should like to impress on the students that student career is a priod of preparation for battle of life. Failure in preparation means failure in battle.

FREEDOM OF VOTERS AT THE ELECTION

If democray is to be made safe for India, the voters should be allowed to vote for any candidate without fear or favour. In order to ensure this, the police should observe strict neutrality. Generally speaking, I may say from my experience that the police officers at the higher level have not interfered in the elections. But the same cannot be said of the lower ranks. In small constituencies if subordinate officials interest themselves in a particular candidate or party that will lead to great havoc. I would suggest that better type of men be recruited with adquate emoluments and better prospects. As more and more responsibilities are thrown on the police, they should be kept above temptation. A well trained and contented police force will be an asset to society and ensure freedom and safety to the citizens.

AT THE CROSS ROADS

Since writing this, events in Madras City have taken place unexpectedly in

such quick succession that these events made Madras citizens feel helpless. Nevertheless, some sections of the citizens expressed their resentment and disapproval in a crude way. People do not realise that taking law into their own hands is negation of democracy. The government ordered a judicial enquiry into these incidents. The Chief Minister did not stand on prestige and did the right thing in having met the doctors and the medical students, though there seems to have been divided counsel in regard to this, amongst his followers. Stooping to conquer in public interest may be justified. But for this move, the tension might have continued and become worse. He assured his critics that he would accept the Tribunal's decision. Thus, he cleared the atmosphere and restored normalcy in public life. Democrcy is at cross roads now. Whether it will take a right turn or a wrong turn, will depend upon the public conscience which should assert itself in seeing that law and order is maintained at any cost. Otherwise there will be no safety for the public.

FUTURE OF THE PARTY.

Friends would like to know what should be the future of the party. You may remember that we met at Woodlands Hotel, Royapetta on 8-3-1966. Sri K. Paramasivam was responsible for convening the meeting. Subsequently he became the General Secretary. The question of taking part in the elections was then mooted. I advised that we might wait till the next elections and organise ourselves in the meanwhile. My advice was accepted though some of the partymen were disappointed with it. As a result of the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Party it is expected that the party will be revived. If so whom is it going to oppose in the election? It can only be the Congress and not the D. M. K. who themselves have declared that they are our successors. In a parliamentary democracy, if you follow the British practice, there can only be two well-defined parties—party in power and party in opposition. On the other hand, if you follow the continental practice there will be three groups—Rightists, Leftists, and Centrists. As things are, we have accepted the British Parliamentary system and there can be only two parties. Already there are two parties functioning—the Congress and D. M. K. Our party will be a superfluous one and will be a misfit in the existing context.

Possibly we might strike out a new line—we may have a well-organised group which will study all problems facing the country and express its opinions on them. It will help to create public opinion for or against any burning question of the day. If the right type of men from districts, though small in number, can come forward and join us the party can function from outside. Their criticisms being disinterested are likely to be useful to the public. This experiment is worth trying.

These are my views and they may be canvassed by the members of the party when they meet tomorrow and come to any decision they like. I would like however to caution the members that without proper organisation and necessary funds to support it, no party can contest the election successfully now-a-days.

CONCLUSION

In the present unsettled state of affairs in the country, no one can predict what is in store for us. Though I am an

optimist, our future prospects do not appear to be rosy at all. There is no silver lining in the cloud. Nevertheless let us hope for better days soon, as life without hope is unthinkable. Actuated by that hope, we should recreate our society with a new outlook and a fresh vision. Our leaders in all walks of life, should subject themselves to strict discipline and punctuality and then by their practice set an example to the present generation—students in particular. Students cannot be blamed for indiscipline as they merely walk in the foot-steps of their elders and betters. Uncertainity about their future has added to this indiscipline. Our M. Ps., M. L. As., and M. L. Cs., should view their responsibilities in their proper perspective. The country should come first and the party next. Some of the representatives have reversed this order. Sometimes they are carried away by their party interest to the exclusion of public interest. Party differences degenerate into partisan squabbles. The rank and file of the party resort to violence to the detriment of public peace and tranquillity. To avoid this, the representatives of the people should observe complete self-restraint and keep their followers under constant check. In this connection I would emphasis that there should be elementary honesty in public life.

In the economic field, we are where we have been 20 years ago. All our five year plans have not improved the basic needs of life—food, clothing and housing. We should follow the example of West Germany and Japan, the two countries which were practically wiped out in the last war. They have not only come up to their old standard in a short space of time but also have gone to the extent of helping other countries. India is benefited by their help. We must go all out to produce the maximum in all directions to make our country self-sufficient. We must aim at exporting finished goods from our country. Our motto should be "Work hard, work harder and work hardest".

Men may come, men may go. Parties may appear and disappear. Empires rose and fell. Civilisations flourish and disappear. Justice Party as an organisation may disappear, but the principles for which the Party stands are of eternal value and will never perish.